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UVRAT :
PATHWAY TO
NONVIOLENT SOCIAL ORDER

ARYA TULSI

ed and translated by :
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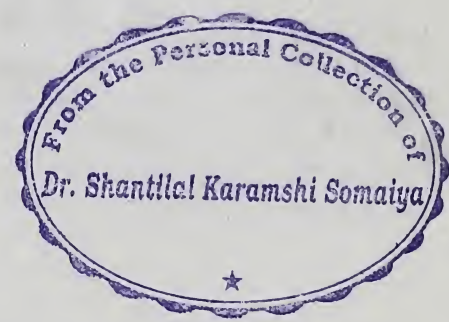
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**Anuvrat : A Pathway to
Nonviolent Social Order**



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ACHARYA TULSI



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Compiled and translated by :
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PREFACE

The present book is a vivid description and exposition of one of the most remarkable moral movements in the world—Anuvrat—conceived and shaped by late Gurudev Tulsi, a profound scholar, revered Acharya, Poet, Philosopher and Saint, the like of whom humanity is blessed with once in centuries. His is not an armchair philosophy; he was a man of action, whose sole concern was the moral upliftment of humanity. As a great visionary and a greater preceptor he transcended all narrow limits of race, colour, gender and sect. He was truly a universal man.

The only parallel to Anuvrat that one can think of in global terms was Moral Rearmament (MRA), also called Buchmanism, or Oxford Group, a modern, nondenominational revivalistic movement founded by U. S. Churchman Frank N. D. Buchman (1878-1961). But it is all too well-known that the movement became highly controversial and its influence declined after the death of Buchman and his successor, Peter Howard.

Anuvrat, on the other hand, addressed itself to those universal urges and concerns which, if not met with adequately and soon, may become a major cause of civilizational death and cultural doom. It beckons humanity to wake up from its deep spiritual slumber and save itself before it gets too late. Shorn of all narrow and divisive loyalties it is truly a human document.

R. P. Bhatnagar

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Anuvrat : A Nonsectarian Religion

Even one who leads a grossly materialistic life sometimes craves for a few moments of unearthly experience. In those rare moments his inner consciousness is awakened renewing his faith in life. A few repetitions of the phenomenon give birth to a new viewpoint. In a way even this is made possible on account of the heritage bequeathed by his ancestors. But unless he makes the experience his own before relating it with the past, it does not become authentic. The external manifestation of the authentic attitude is identified as religion.

We find in the world both religion and religious sects. As a matter of fact we see very little of religion and a surfeit of religious sects. Today people are called religious not because of religion but as a result of their belonging to religious sects. Paradoxically even as religious values are declining, the number of 'religious' people is increasing. Is it possible for someone to remain religious in the face of the decline of religious values? This is a question that invites serious attention.

India's population is nearing eight hundred million*. Indian culture is dominated by religion. Here if not a hundred per cent, at least a good ninety-five per cent people are religious. Jains,

* At present it is estimated to be more than nine hundred fifty million.

Christians, Hindus, Muslims—almost all of them regard themselves as religious. They are so only nominally. How many of them are authentically religious?—Maybe, not even half a million. This situation is giving rise to a parallel set of values. Else, how can a truly religious person suffer from inauthenticity? The most surprising thing is that an individual who feels proud to call himself religious has a similar feeling in reaping the results of corrupt and dishonest practices. How can this paradox be resolved?

Generally religion is associated not with one's conduct but with one's family tradition. An individual automatically comes to belong to the religion of his family. Even though he may not know the ABC of his religion, he comes to be called a Jain, Christian or Muslim. This discrepancy is rendering life hollow. For religion is not something meant for display or for being appended to somebody's name. It is in fact a lifestyle to be put into practice. Claiming to be religious despite leading an immoral and inauthentic life is as ridiculous as a silken patch in a quilt of rags. How can a man given to immoral habits and practices like violence, suppression, fraud, caste/ colour/ racial discrimination be ever called religious? The most reprehensible blemish on the face of religion is the contradiction between one's profession of religion and one's conduct. The need of the hour is to rid religion of superstitions, evil traditions and sectarianism. The responsibility of reinterpreting and reformulating religious values according to the changing context is squarely of religious teachers and preceptors. Precisely for this reason with the advent of freedom we thought of launching a moral movement or a nonsectarian religion which is now widely known by the name of Anuvrat.

We took good care to ensure that Anuvrat did not degenerate into another sect.. Anyone can be an Anuvrati (a follower of Anuvrat) irrespective of race, class, sectarian faith, gender, colour or language. The minimum qualification of an Anuvrati is faith in

human values. Anuvrat has disproved the thesis that there can be no nonsectarian or universal religion. We use the word 'religion' to mean purity of life and sublimity of conduct. This explains why people of diverse faiths, including socialists and communists, were drawn towards Anuvrat.

Anuvrat is not at all concerned as to whether someone adopts a particular mode of worship or not, whether someone goes to a religious place like a temple, church or mosque or not, whether someone believes in soul, God and salvation or not. Its sole concern is with a clean life and refined conduct. It does not in the least bother itself about the external symbols and paraphernalia of traditional religions. It recognizes religion only in people's experience and practice.

Further, Anuvrat is neither opposed to tradition nor enamoured of modernity. It believes in reconciling the eternal and contemporary values. Its objective is the creation of a right type of human being, one who lives according to a new philosophy of life. With this in mind we prepared a brief code of conduct, which is a universal human document.

At the time of Anuvrat's first convention at the Constitution Club in New Delhi I was asked by many newsmen, if it was necessary for an Anuvrati to adopt Terapanth or Jainism and if an Anuvrati had to treat me as his Guru and bow to me. I said 'no' to both the questions. Anyone could be an Anuvrati simply by practising its code of conduct.

Put laconically, Anuvrat is

1. a basic minimum code of conduct of life
2. a nonsectarian religion
3. a bold step to bring about a change of values
4. a way of matching words and deeds

5. a movement to establish human unity
6. an attempt to bring conduct and knowledge closer together
7. a means of wiping out the criminal instinct
8. a movement to build character
9. a method of self-introspection

In the above context an Anuvarti is one who

1. does not take part in destructive violence
2. does not attack anybody
3. believes in religious tolerance
4. does not hurl accusations at others, their class or religion
5. does not transgress business morality
6. does not use drugs and intoxicants
7. does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour etc.
8. does not practise untouchability
9. does not support social dogmas and malpractices
10. does not resort to unethical electoral practices
11. does not spread violence and hatred
12. does not encourage separatism
13. does not contribute to environmental pollution.

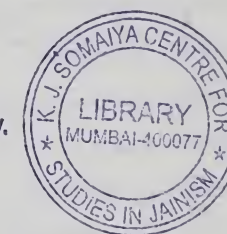
Besides practising the above ideals every Anuvarti must display honesty in whichever field of activity he is engaged. For example:

1. An Anuvarti student shall not resort to unfair means for passing examinations.

2. An Anuvarti teacher shall not bestow undue favour on a student and award good marks to him.
3. An Anuvarti businessman shall completely eschew adulteration and shall not sell fake articles as genuine ones.
4. An Anuvarti employee shall not take bribes.
5. An Anuvarti officer shall not abuse his authority.
6. An Anuvarti worker shall not shirk work.
7. An Anuvarti farmer shall not ill-treat his animals; nor shall he resort to hoarding.
8. An Anuvarti seeking election shall not buy votes.

Anuvrat is not a wild dream, nor does it indulge in making the exaggerated claim of reforming the entire world. It is simply a view point, a philosophy of life. Anyone who first understands it and then puts it into practice can become a true, authentic human being. Its only aim is to make human beings truly human. It seeks to make man aware of his true being and of what is right and desirable, so that he may stop leading a mechanical life and practise human values.

Please handle the book Carefully.



Anuvrat : *A Defence Against Loss of Faith*

Even though it has hardly anything new in it, Anuvrat in itself represents a new point of view. In other words it is a new presentation of eternal values and it offers a solution to contemporary problems. It has emerged as a human religion transcending the limitations of time and space. At no time will its usefulness be subject to doubt. People all over the world can use it as an armour against loss of faith.

As is the case with similar movements, Anuvrat has a theoretical aspect and a practical aspect. The former is ungrudgingly and widely acclaimed, but the latter runs into all sorts of difficulties and is therefore not yet very strong. What are these difficulties ? They are of two types—one relating to the individual and the other to the external circumstances. Together they can be listed as follows:

1. lack of moral faith
2. inadequate development of the power of resistance
3. mental weakness
4. increasing ambitiousness
5. endless competition
6. craving for false prestige
7. absence of a moral atmosphere

8. irrelevant social norms
9. lack of courage to point out evil
10. destitution and surfeit
11. legal complications

There may be many more factors that become instrumental in shaking individual morality, but the most important one, according to me, is the absence of moral faith. Generally every man likes to swim along the current. It needs a lot of courage to swim against it, but without doing so it is impossible to practise Anuvrat in life. Now there are people practically in all walks of life who have the necessary courage and who are translating the Anuvrat ideals into practical life, but they are very few. It may be argued that spiritually speaking numbers do not matter, but they do indisputably add strength. However, what is important is not how many people have already become Anuvratists but the fact that Anuvrat's significance can under no circumstances be underestimated. If anything, now more than ever before society needs Anuvrat. There is no department of life that has remained unaffected by the virus of moral degradation. And even as concern is being rightly expressed about the collective health of society, it is worth remembering that every reform starts with the individual. Anuvrat's basic approach is reform of the individual so that a solid foundation can be laid for collective reform.

Please handle the book Carefully.

Take Care of Character and Everything will Take Care of Itself

There is a definite notion of salvation in Indian culture. Votaries of this culture nurse an intense desire in their hearts for deliverance from this world. Prompted by it they make a supplication to God as follows:

Lead me from untruth to truth.
Lead me from darkness to light.
Lead me from death to immortality.

This is a beautiful prayer. However, I want to change the wording slightly. I want to bring human endeavour into it and rephrase it thus:

May I go from untruth to truth!
May I go from darkness to light!
May I go from death to immortality!

Here the focus is on one's own duty and the efforts one makes to fulfil it. It is not unnatural in a culture dominated by faith to make supplications, but they should not be at the cost of or substitutes for human endeavour. One believing in endeavour firmly resolves:

I renounce the wrong and embrace the right path.
I renounce ignorance and embrace knowledge.
I renounce falsehood and embrace truth.

Such a person, while remaining faithful to God, will endeavour to achieve his goal. There is need to instil this idea in the minds of children so that their subconscious may always prompt them to endeavour. Personality development is not possible by any means in the absence of one's endeavour.

We have it on the authority of authentic people that only he deserves to be taught who knows that modesty does one good while immodesty spells disaster. All education should aim at removing life's contradictions. If education itself suffers from contradictions how can the above purpose be achieved? Moreover, such an education can never bring about personality development. In my opinion the primary object of education is to awaken inner consciousness. Modern education is developing the mind and the intellect but it is grossly neglecting the awakening of consciousness. And herein lies our main problem, which deserves serious consideration.

For awakening inner consciousness as much attention should be paid to the development of character as is paid to that of the mind and the intellect. Individual character affects national character which in turn helps to mould the former. Anuvrat has played a crucial role in establishing the primacy of character, for Anuvrat is a code of conduct that helps people overcome their weaknesses and lead a healthy life. It has taught them to free themselves from the tangle of ritualistic worship and to concentrate on character-building so that a universal, human religion comes into being. Thus Anuvrat has widened the scope of religion by weaning it from the narrow limitations of race, region, language, sect, colour, gender etc. It is open to all, so much so that even those who do not believe in the existence of God can become Anuvratists.

Anuvrat and Democracy

What is immutable in this mutable world? We see that everything is undergoing a change. We also believe in change and do not want to run away from something merely because it is new; nor do we want to stick to something merely because it is old. Quite often giving up the old and adopting the new becomes essential. Both time and prudence warrant such a change and one such change being demanded today is in our lifestyle. The style of living and the values of life associated with monarchical and feudal times cannot be acceptable in a democratic milieu. Becoming an Anuvrati is one sure way of effecting a change.

The elements characterising the monarchical system were:

1. Dependence on others
2. Exploitation
3. Sanctioning inequality
4. Wantonness and luxury
5. Preferring expediency to freedom of action

Democracy is characterized by their opposites:

1. Self-reliance
2. Enjoying the fruits of one's labour
3. Sanctioning equality

4. A life of industry
5. Preferring freedom of action to expediency

To bring about a change in lifestyle and values two things are necessary: transformation of ideas and temperamental transformation. Indians are experiencing difficulties in post-independence India because by ideas and temperament they still belong to the monarchical period. Their difficulties will be over once they switch over to democratic ideas and temperament. Anuvrat is an ideal instrument for doing so since it is perfectly consonant with a democratic lifestyle and values.

Monarchical and feudal elements incite people to accumulate wealth, which necessitates resort to unethical practices leading to vitiated lifestyles. And immorality cannot be rooted out without changing lifestyle and values. An ideal way of achieving the objective will be a harmonious combination of a wise administrative control and Anuvrat mental training.

Here it is necessary to point out that Anuvrat should not be mistaken as an attempt to harmonize different religions. It is completely nonsectarian and has the status of a 'sect-neutral' religion. It is the code of conduct of an independent religion, not of reconciled religions. Though this code is aimed at individual uprightness, it has the potential of making a whole nation and the world moral. What is now needed is a 'collectivized' form of Anuvrat—Anuvrati families, Anuvrati villages and larger Anuvrati communities. Here it is worth mentioning that mental training through Anuvrat is not a nation-specific need. It is equally valid on an international scale. Living as we are in a scientific age, traditional religion can no longer deliver the goods since it is riddled with all kinds of superstitions and irrational rituals. Worse still, it is downright sectarian. Anuvrat does not share any of these blemishes. It is completely nonsectarian and free from all

senseless rituals. It is merely a course in refining man's basic tendencies. It can therefore be the universal religion of a scientific age. For this it is necessary that all those involved in spreading the message of Anuvrat should be fully conversant with the economic, social, political, educational and cultural changes that are taking place in the world. An Anuvrati uninformed about these changes will at best talk of morality in a vacuum and will not be able to relate his proposals for reform to the contemporary context and will thus be completely out of step with modern sensibility.

Individual morality, though good in itself, is not enough in an age where life is predominantly corporate. A moral person must have the strength to oppose and fight immorality. Moral development on a societal scale is possible when power is in the hands of moral people. It cannot take place so long as economic and political power is in immoral hands. The common man is usually attracted towards those wielding power. Therefore there is a critical need to bring about a change in the power structure. A determined struggle has to be waged to achieve the above objective. But the mode of the struggle is most crucial. The way to wage it must be moral and must fulfil five requirements:

1. Ability to give up selfishness
2. Cultivating love and friendship. These feelings should exist even for those against whom the struggle is waged.
3. Rigorous self-control and tolerance to pain
4. Patience and mental balance
5. Wisdom in taking decisions and giving directions to others

Even if there are a few people with the above qualifications prepared to wage a struggle against immorality the balance of power can tilt towards righteousness.

A Social Order Inspired by Anuvrat

It is often held that all our problems are due to economic disparity. In my opinion it is a very big cause, but not the only one. In fact it is all due to wrong or perverse thinking. It is wrong attitudes and viewpoints that lie at the base of economic disparities. Racial discrimination, casteism and poverty all go to prove that one man's view of another is very vitiated. Even when industry, intelligence, unconventional thinking and planning succeed in removing unemployment, gross economic disparities persist resulting in some people rolling in wealth and others living in a state of destitution. Its only reason is lack of love. The secret of a happy and contented family is love. Today there is a need to regard the whole world as a family by extending the scope of love. Political thinkers subscribed to the above view a long time ago. It is truly regrettable that religious thinkers refuse to accept it even today. How natural and wonderful it would have been if the call for economic equality had come from a religious platform!

Lord Mahavira propounded the principle of non-possession and non-accumulation and many other religious leaders also supported it. But no religious person applied it practically to society. Poets and authors of scriptures felt and experienced its truth but gave no concrete programme of action to realize it. Today people have come out with a solution to the problem of poverty, which is no longer blamed on the divine will, but is held to be the result of a man made, faulty social order. Gone are the days when poverty was eulogized. Modern thinking would have the defective social order changed or reformed.

In this age of reform everyone should change old attitudes. Once again the ancient belief in earning religious and spiritual merit by helping the deprived sections of society is gaining ground. On other hand these sections are greatly agitated knowing that their miserable plight is the result of a faulty order created by the affluent. One consequence of it is the rise of violence. The only way to atone for it is to remove the cause that has given rise to it. Therefore whatever is being done in the present for removing economic disparities is not an exercise in charity but merely an atonement made for past mistakes. Genuine atonement requires recognizing one's mistake and a firm resolve not to repeat it. Anuvrat has been presenting its considered views in this field for a few decades now. Its thinking has reached an advanced stage. For it to succeed it must be now put into action. Action is nothing but the final stage of thinking—the stage at which ideals are given practical shape.

The tasks before the Anuvrat movement are :

1. Putting Anuvrat principles into practice
2. Creating a world order based on human unity

For achieving the second, four things are necessary: moral faith, love, sympathy and an open, objective viewpoint. Breach of moral faith results in harming the interests of others and exploiting them. In the absence of love, one man looks down upon another, besides hating and humiliating him. Lack of sympathy gives birth to selfishness and complete apathy towards the difficulties and discomforts of others. Finally, without developing an open and objective attitude, one tends to destroy others' right to freedom of thinking and becomes viciously intolerant of any difference of opinion.

It is clear that the task is difficult and complex. For accomplishing it the Anuvratists will need complete faith, strong resolution and unrelenting endeavour.

Anuvrat's Revolutionary Background

Please handle the book Carefully.

We can broadly divide people into two classes: those who want to go from darkness to light and those who prefer to wallow in darkness. It is only the former who can be candidates for revolution making it possible for change to occur both in individuals and their ideas. Even revolutions are of two types: one abrupt and striking and the other gradual and unperceived. A revolution of the former type causes tremors that give the impression of bringing about big conspicuous changes. Their effects, however, turn out to be short-lived and ultimately therefore the revolution fails. A revolution of the latter type causes slow changes which, when they take place, are not easily noticed, but which over a period of time result in a long-lasting total transformation. Anuvrat belongs to the second type.

Since beginning its avowed aim has been moral progress whose foundation is moral thinking. In fact moral ideas and moral actions are interactive. However, without the former the latter are not possible. Therefore Anuvrat first directed its attention towards a revolution in ideas. It proved that anyone can bring about a remarkable change in his habits and behaviour by undertaking a serious exercise in intense introspection. Wholesome ideas, thorough determination and proper conduct—this three-point programme can bring about a revolutionary change in an individual's life. On its basis Anuvrat has sown the seeds of a revolution in ideas as well as conduct. One

remarkable thing about it is its acceptance even by those who call themselves atheists.

It is not possible to evaluate and assess the impact of Anuvrat on people, but its achievement can be measured by its success in one specified field—de-addiction. It started a campaign against drug addiction both individually and collectively and succeeded in weaning thousands of people from the menace of smoking, gambling, drinking and drugging. This in itself is no mean achievement. Here it is legitimate to ask how those won over to abandoning their addictions can be expected not to relapse into old habits. Obviously high principles, including those of Anuvrat, cannot turn into lifelong practices merely on the basis of brave resolutions. Many people genuinely want to imbibe morality but are forced to give up half way in the face of adverse circumstances. Being not unmindful of these difficulties, Anuvrat does not stop short of prescribing the right remedy. It combines Preksha Meditation with itself. Its practice brings about changes in the secretions of the endocrine glands and these chemical changes affect individual habits. Countless people have experienced a miraculous transformation in their lives through the practice of Preksha Meditation.. From this point of view Anuvrat and Preksha Meditation are mutually complementary.

Anuvrat : A Platform for Reconciliation

The field of *dharma* is one of friendship, nonviolence and compassion. Friendship and compassion result in a feeling of goodwill and fraternity. People wedded to *dharma* have a great scope for sowing the seeds of the above qualities. It is but natural to be eager to see them sprout and bear fruit. But from this point of view the history of the past two thousand years of the practice of *dharma* has been disappointing. People did from time to time lay stress on the desirability of fraternity among all those professing *dharma*, but the much-wished-for lasting results did not accrue.

Thinking people discussed it in great detail and tried to reach some conclusion by churning facts. What differentiates different sects? What are the bases of these differences? Are they helpful or harmful? Efforts were made to find answers to these questions. Generally it was felt that in the Age of Philosophy there was no conflict despite there being differences of ideas. In the Age of Reason controversies, sophistry and perverse argumentation had the upper hand and the tendency to fight over ideas grew. Along with it came sectarian ignorance and confusion. Gaining true knowledge became secondary in the confrontation of opposite ideas. Different camps were set up, each ruthlessly upholding its own viewpoint. Let me illustrate it by citing an example.

Once a believer happened to meet a saint. Being a seeker he made obeisance to the saint and sought the way of attaining peace. The saint was a *Brahmadvaitvadi* (believer in the oneness of the individual and universal souls). He firmly believed in एक ब्रह्म द्वितीयो नास्ति " (the eternal, impersonal Absolute or *Brahma* (ब्रह्म) is the only ultimate reality and none other) and in सोऽहम् (that *Brahma* is none other than me myself). This belief enables us to become God and this awareness of godhead is the best means of attaining peace. 'So, let me give you this *mantra* सोऽहम्, सोऽहम्, सोऽहम्. By repeatedly incanting it you will attain *siddhi* (सिद्धि) or *yogic* powers.'

The devotee started incanting the *mantra* conscientiously. One day a *Dwaitvadi*-believer in the duality of the individual soul (जीव) and the universal soul (ब्रह्म) reached there. He heard the devotee repeating the *mantra* (सोऽहम्) and said to him, 'You innocent man! What are you doing ? It will result in a disaster.'

The devotee, deeply grieved, looked at the saint and said, 'I had been to a saint and am following his instructions. Please do let me know where I have gone wrong.' The saint said, 'Believe God and subject yourself to His authority; else no good will accrue to you. Add *da* (दा) to your *mantra*. Say दासोऽहम् (O, Lord ! You are my all. I am simply your servant).'

The devotee started repeating the modified *mantra* (दासोऽहम्) (I am Thy servant). After some time the first saint happened to pass by his place. Hearing him intone a different *mantra*, he wanted to know the reason. The devotee told him what had happened. Full of compassion, the saint told him that he had been cheated. He would not be able to do any good to himself until he trusted his own powers. He should add *sa* to the new *mantra* - सदा सोऽहम् I have for ever been that - *Brahma* or the Universal Soul).

Unfortunately the devotee could not continue even that for long, for the *Dwaitvadi* (dualist) saint came again and modified the *mantra* as दास दासोऽहम् (Lord! I am your servant's servant).

The poor devotee got completely bewildered. Not aware of the background to the difference between *Dwaitwad* (dualism) and *Advaitwad* (monism) he alternated between *dasadasoham* and *sadasoham*. More and more da's and sa's were added as the saints stuck to their views and kept coaxing him to follow them. It is this tendency that encourages sectarianism.

State backing accentuates the sectarian confusion. History bears witness to the fact that any collaboration between state power on the one hand and armed forces or religious authority on the other creates conditions of national catastrophe. Whenever there are conflicts in the name of religion and they transgress the jurisdiction of religion, people feel like reconsidering the whole matter.

There are a few *sutras* (aphorisms) in the two-thousand year-old inscriptions of Ashoka that aim at harmonizing diverse sects. One of them says that all sanctimonious sects should live harmoniously together. Some other kings also worked in this direction. Similarly, a few *Acharyas* also deserve mention in this context. Among the important Jain *Acharyas*, Acharya Haribhadra and Acharya Hemchandra Suri propagated reconciling and harmonizing views. They could influence contemporary rulers only because of their liberal outlook. Many *Shaiva** rulers treated Acharya Hemchandra as their *guru*. It helped bridge the gulf between Jains and *Shaivas*.

Even though India did not have as many wars and massacres in the name of religion as the West, she too did not remain altogether

* *Worshippers of Lord Shiva, one of the Hindu Trinity.*

unaffected by them. But that is not the point here. It is the question people began asking in the face of wars and violence in the name of religion: What is the good of a religion which divides men and erects walls between them? *Dharma* - an indisputable truth of life became controversial because of divergent views of the people.

The need for interreligious harmony came to be more keenly felt in the present century. Some effort in this direction was made by Gandhiji. There were some other efforts too. *Anuvrat* carried these efforts forward. Through it, it became very easy to provide a common platform for the people professing different religions.

In the very first year of its emergence *Anuvrat* took on the role of common platform by organizing seminars and discussions attended by people professing different faiths. Within five to six years it became the centre of such activities and thus came to be recognised as a harmonizing platform. In 1955-56 it included among its programmes a five point plan aimed at creating interreligious harmony, which is as follows :

1. A positive attitude should be adopted. Our position should be explained and defended without criticising others verbally or in print.
2. A tolerant attitude towards the views of others should be adopted.
3. No contempt should be preached against other sects or their followers.
4. Improper behaviour like ostracism towards people changing sects should be eschewed.
5. Collective efforts should be made to reflect in everything one does the basic principles of *dharma*—nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, continence and nonacquisition.

An atmosphere of mutual goodwill between various religions and sects can be generated by following the above five-point plan. Nonviolence and friendship shall not take any concrete shape unless religious people are imbued with this harmonious feeling.

We were spending the four months of the rainy season (चतुर्मास) of 1958 in Kanpur. An all-religion meet was arranged there under the aegis of *Anuvrat*. Representatives of many religions attended it. A Muslim principal remarked on the occasion, 'I am delighted at this sight. It is for the first time in Kanpur's history that leaders of different religions have shared a common platform. It's only such meets that can create an atmosphere of religious harmony.'

Doubts about and contempt for *Anuvrat* born of ignorance went on diminishing as it came to be used as a harmonizing platform. As understanding grew, contempt changed into love.

According to me it is its nonsectarian character that has made *Anuvrat* popular. Its Code of Conduct is not fettered by the beliefs of any particular religion. One of its most significant ideals is tolerance for all religions. As a matter of fact it epitomizes the essence of all religions. In order to transcend the specificities of religions, *Anuvrat* interprets religion in two ways—religious worship (उपासना धर्म) and religious character (चरित्र धर्म). Character is the very basis of life and therefore it is necessary to have its common code. *Anuvrat* is an attempt to meet that need.

The mode of worship is a personal matter and there can be no prescription or compulsion about it. Everyone is free to choose his own way of doing it. A special issue of the fortnightly *Anuvrat* was brought out to highlight this point. It was entitled *Upasana Visheshank* (Special Issue Relating to Worship). It

contains useful material relating to the distinction between character and mode of worship.

As far as I am concerned, the line dividing the two is very clear. 'Worship' is periodic, 'character' is permanent. Let me illustrate it. We can eat twice, thrice or more often. This is analogous to worship. But besides the gross food, we take another all the time, that which is technically called *Rom Aahar** (रोम आहार) in the absence of which we cannot survive even for a few moments. This *Rom Aahar* is analogous to character.

Another way of looking at the two of them is to treat worship as *parva dharma* (पर्व धर्म), a holy law to be observed on special occasions. and to look upon character as *nitya dharma* (नित्य धर्म) a law to be observed at all times. By recognizing the distinction between 'worship' and 'character', we strengthen unity and harmony. *Anuvrat* has always been in the vanguard when it comes to harmony, and will continue to do so. It does not talk of the change of sect, but of the change of heart or manifest behaviour and the forces behind it. The latter is equivalent to a transformation of life. The basic spirit of *dharma* lies in transforming life. *Anuvrat* treats it as a sacred cause to highlight this basic spirit. As a natural consequence, *Anuvrat* has become a harmonizing platform.

Human consciousness finds its expression through awareness or understanding. Existential awareness swells the flow of the stream of consciousness. Similarly, awareness of the times is also a part of the same stream. Without this awareness in good measure, it is not possible to keep pace with the times. There was a time when inter-religious conflicts abounded. Arguments and counter-arguments given within the vortex of sectarian thinking are unrelated to truth.

* Assimilating food from air by a line of hair.

The harmonizing viewpoint of *Anuvrat* has played a significant role in transcending the confines of narrow thinking.

With the growth of *Anuvrat* thinking, the meaning of liberalism became clear. It confirmed the fact that it is possible to experience unity and harmony at the level of thinking also. Being inheritors to the Jain tradition, the principle of harmony comes naturally to the followers of Jainism. It is therefore surprising how this principle became lost to an inclusive philosophy. Getting entangled into trivia disputes inhibits the preservation and promotion of a good tradition. Harmony and reconciliation were needed to overcome mutual contentions.

We support the principle of reconciliation at the familial, social, national and international levels. How ridiculous is it then for us to ignore it in the fields of *dharma* and philosophy? This question kept pestering my mind. All the more so, because religious harmony can greatly influence world harmony.

Once the harmonious view gained respectability, we extended the movement considerably. In the post-Second World War period the human mind was gripped with fear, uncertainty and new possibilities of war. Dark clouds of strife and inequity hovered over humanity. At that time I issued a message for all the people of the world. The *Jain Shvetambar Terapanthi Mahasabha* (Calcutta) circulated it under the heading 'A Message of Peace for the Strife-torn World. (अशान्त विश्व को शान्ति का संदेश). A copy of the message reached Mahatma Gandhi. Commenting on the nine principles suggested in it for achieving human unity and harmony he wrote, "Tremendous good would result only if the world followed these nine principles as ideals."

The conflicts that raged in my mind at the sight of religious discord and hatred found a concrete expression in my activities following the *Anuvrat* Movement. I had written *Kaluyashovila*

(कालूयशोविलास) during 1996-2000 of the Vikram era (1940 AD). It contained my dialogues on disputatious subjects with the representatives of other sects. But once I understood the impropriety of including matter likely to displease others and show them in a bad light, the way to the revision of the book got opened. By the Hindu Calender (Vikram Sanvat) year 2005-6 (1949 AD) we had a clear policy on this matter and we lost interest in contentious and disputatious modes of exchanges.

Even after establishing the principle of harmony in our writings, there were many areas open to controversy. One of them was the language issue. At that time the everyday language of the people in Rajasthan was Marwari. There was no convention of using the honorific second person form of address *aap*. During our stay at Jaipur there took place a meeting with the *Acharyas* of other Jain sects. During our conversations the forms of address used were *the* (थे), *thane* (थाने) etc, which are not honorific. Despite the fact that we meant no disrespect to them, the sheer force of habit and custom prevented us from using the honorific form. It caused an adverse reaction. So we took the practical decision that good intentions should match words as part of the process of creating harmony.

We marched forward having decided in favour of renouncing disputatious exchanges and using refined language. Visiting places of worship belonging to other sects came into vogue. We were having our *Chaturmas* in Bombay, when the well-known local Christian priest, Father William, came in our contact. We went to his church and our relations became extremely cordial. Already we had been visiting Jains and Vaishnava temples. Thus the scope of our operations extended.

Acharya Shri Vijayballabh Suri belonging to the idolworshipping sect was at that time (Vikram year 2011, i.e. 1954 AD) in Bombay. He

was very old and unwell. I went to him along with members of my *sangh*. He was himself an advocate of inter-sect harmony. Our very first meeting generated so much goodwill that to this day Acharya Vijayasamudra Suri of the same order cherishes its memories.

Acharya Vijayaballabh Suri died after some time. On getting the news I went to his place and recited *Mangal Paath* (Invocation of Blessings) according to their method. It further cemented the bonds of mutual harmony.

Again, another obstacle to harmony is the insistence on using higher and lower seats during public functions. I had no such predilection. Once a Buddhist monk came to see me and said, 'I want to talk to you but the problem is that I can't sit at a lower level.' I said, 'It's no problem. Let us sit down together on the floor.' I got down the raised wooden seat and this had a great impact on the Buddhist monk.

A similar thing happened in Delhi. Jainendraji organized an interreligious seminar there. On the first day of the seminar he came with a disconsolate face and said, 'Acharyaji! Is it possible for you to leave your raised seat and sit down during the programme?' I said, 'Why not?' He felt greatly relieved to hear it and I sat on the floor throughout the seminar. The lay followers of mine objected to it and said that their *Acharya* could not sit alongside ordinary monks. At that time it was a new development and so it bewildered the followers. However, it did not take long for our modest people to grasp the harmonizing policy and they fell in line with it. Countless examples of this kind reinforced the feelings of harmony, cordiality and unity.

During our *Chaturmas* in Bombay in Vikram year 2011 (1954), the editor of the Gujarati paper *Prabuddha Jeevan*, Parmanandji Kapadia, wrote a critical article on the principles of *Terapanth*. Earlier also many articles and comments on the same theme had appeared, but they were not genuinely critical. We never responded to views written

in anger or out of contempt. Our policy from the beginning had been not to react to criticism lacking pith and substance, for charges and counter charges can go on endlessly and may prove counterproductive.

Kapadiaji's article was entitled '*Ahimsa ki Adhuri Samajh*' (Incomplete Understanding of Nonviolence). On reading it we felt it represented a certain point of view. We debated the worthwhileness of responding to it and finally decided to do so. I told Muni Nath Malji to give a proper analytical response. He presented our reaction under the heading '*Ahimsa ki Sahi Samajh*' (Proper Understanding of Nonviolence) and it was sent to Kapadiaji. He did not agree to all the points made in it. Everyone has his own viewpoint and one's own viewpoint should not be imposed on others. Even then his reaction to our rejoinder was such that harmonious understanding strengthened. For the sake of the readers, its summary is given below,

I had exhaustively reviewed the beliefs of *Terapanth* regarding nonviolence under the title 'Incomplete Understanding of Nonviolence'. In response to it Muni Nath Malji has in a scholarly article entitled 'Proper Understanding of Nonviolence' presented the essence of the beliefs of *Terapanth*. It is not necessary that we accept fully what he has said in it; yet I cannot but express my appreciation of the exalted style of his response. One can possibly find some traces of satire or invective in my article, but so far as his presentation is concerned, it is not only free from all rancour and unrestrained use of language but also full of sweet reasoning, profundity and reasonableness. I have indeed felt extremely happy to read it. Such presentations can never generate bitterness or disharmony.

Harmony is the ideal as well as the goal of *Anuvrat*. I feel happy to see *Anuvrat* as a forum for harmony. Through it we have to further reinforce the spirit of harmony and thereby establish human values in people's lives.

A Socialst System and Reduction of Possessions

Please handle the book Carefully.

The chief basis of building society is its economic system. The progress of a community depends on how advanced and balanced its economy is. I do not subscribe to the view that the above formulation of the economists is not right. Poverty is a social curse. It is true that no society can progress without getting rid of this curse. And yet nonpossession (अपरिग्रह) has its own merit and it is a vital compound of a healthy society.

Nonpossession does not imply either indigence or a tottering economy. Nor is it opposed to production of goods and material wealth. Its essence lies in the feeling of non attachment despite the presence of goods and their consumption. To achieve it one has to undertake a long internal trip. Such a trip essays an investigation into spirituality and discrimination (विवेक). But it is not easy for the common man to practise the highest degree of nonpossession; so Lord Mahavira proposed reduction of possessions.

Basically wealth belongs to nobody until it is acquired through state power, individual strength or business acumen. One who exercises state power can acquire as much wealth and property as he desires. Trial of strength too is a means of establishing ownership. The third factor is business acumen through which an individual can so expand ownership as to enjoy a monopoly of it.

In the absence of clearly defined limits of ownership human wants go on multiplying. Uncontrolled desires result in strong attachment, which in turn leads to enormous amounts of possession, by placing a premium on acquisitiveness.

Intense acquisitiveness is synonymous with a centralized economy, which is good neither socially nor morally. Concentration of wealth or economic powers causes strife, agitation and violence. History bears ample evidence of this fact. Keeping in mind the likely evil consequences of concentration of wealth, attempts have been being made socially and politically to set limits to acquisition.

At the religious level, Lord Mahavir gave it a very deep and serious thought. He interpreted the highest degree of possession (महा परिग्रह) in two ways: enormity of attachment and enormity of acquisition. The former is a mental urge and the latter a physical act. Both are undesirable and together they result in the highest degree of possession.

Attachment and acquisition are undesirable both from the individual and social points of view. Hence the importance of nonpossession or nonacquisition (अपरिग्रह). However, it can also not be denied that good life is impossible in poverty. It is here that the principle of reduction of possessions can be relevant. Reduced possessions imply reduced wants and reduced acquisition. *Anuvrat* presents its agenda of work by upholding this principle of reduction.

Anuvrat's first direction is to build a particular viewpoint. Money is a means of satisfying needs; it is not an end. This is a universal principle. Once it is stabilized, money can be deconcentrated through setting limits to possessions and dispersion. *Anuvrat* has placed more emphasis on the purity of the ways of acquiring things than on the laying down of a definite limit to acquisition. Non-essential possession can be automatically taken care of if all the sources of acquiring things are kept pure and if individual consumption is kept under restraint. In

fact the factors leading to the enormity of acquisition are two: impure means of acquiring and individual non-restraint. If both these factors are removed, reduced possession would automatically follow. This is the way *Anuvrat* shows the way to a better life.

Reduction of possessions has been accepted as a universal truth. It is as much useful for self-improvement as for social amelioration. On this basis it can be theorized that any social system that runs counter to individual welfare shall be equally unuseful socially.

It is an established truth that any activity that lacks spirit remains lifeless. Consciousness vitalized by the inner spirit becomes luminescent spreading light as much inside as outside. It is like a lamp kept on the threshold illuminating the inside as well as outside. In a similar fashion, a social system rooted in the inner consciousness proves beneficial to both the individual and society.

The principle of reduced possessions being grounded in the inner spirit confers benefits on the individual as well as the community. One who believes in human values can never indulge in non-essential acquisition. Compassion and equality are two human values which help us evaluate possessions. Absence of cruelty and presence of compassion destroy acquisitiveness. Similarly, being imbued with the feeling of equality helps one march forward on the road to nonpossession. The above ideas can be phrased differently thus: The trees of life yield three precious fruits—human evaluation, compassion and equality. One who has tasted all the three of life is entitled to practise reduced possessions.

Modern economics teaches the principle that no human being should remain idle. Work is essential to keep his capabilities alive. Moreover, society will suffer if, for example, one who has talent for business is not allowed to practise it. In this respect *Anuvrat* follows a practical principle. It does not forbid a man to engage in business or use his capability in any other way. However, it puts forward the view

that he should not treat wealth earned as his own. He should not retain more than a limited portion of what he has and should disperse the balance. He should subject himself to the twin disciplines— not earning through wrongful means and dispersing the nonessential. All this will result in injecting purity in the means of earning and removing the cause of social misery by shedding the extra or the nonessential.

Anuvrat wants to spread its firm faith in reduced possessions to every nook and cranny. It will benefit individuals and at the same time strengthen the socialistic system. Of course, the latter comes later; the first thing is to spiritually evaluate it in the light of personal good. A social system wedded to the combined values of individual peace of mind, personal freedom and general prosperity can never reject the principle of reduced possessions.

A Socialist System and Reduction in Voilence

One of the premises of modern ideology is that there can be no survival without struggle. Another is that multiplication of wants is necessary for development. It is these excessive wants and rising expectations which account for increased production of goods. To use modern phraseology, struggle and multiplication of needs are the two principles governing present-day living. In older terms it means that the bases of modern life are violence and acquisition or possession.

The thought framework of *Anuvrat* is absolutely different. Its philosophy is based on Lord Mahavira's two thousand-five-hundred-year-old thinking. He had said, "The basis of life is not struggle but nonviolence, love, compassion and friendship". Though it cannot be gainsaid that violence cannot altogether be ruled out from life, however saying so is not the same as implied by the modern viewpoint. For something to be a basis is not the same as its being unavoidable. According to the *Anuvrat* philosophy violence can be life's compulsion, it cannot be its basis. As a consequence, though violence can be explained on the physical plane, it cannot be approved intellectually, because it is not life's basis.

In terms of its prohibition and compulsion, we come across three types of voilence : *arambhaja* (आरंभजा), *virodhja* (विरोधजा) and *sankalpja* (संकल्पजा). *Arambhaja* violence is that which occurs in the

pursuit of an acceptable occupation like agriculture etc. and so it is difficult to avoid it. *Virodhja* violence is that which is generated in self-defence. One who attacks commits violence; in protecting oneself against the attack one commits counterviolence or *virodhja* violence. It is deemed condonable in so far as it is open to a person to protect himself against the assault made by someone with an unhinged mind. *Sankalpja* or premeditated violence is the outcome of aggressive tendencies. It is purposeless. Egoism and carelessness are at the back of this type of violence. The best way to disprove the premise that violence is the basis of life is to highlight the fact that premeditated and wilful violence is both avoidable and undesirable.

Even *arambhaja* and *virodhja* violence, unless necessary or unavoidable, takes on the hue of *sankalpja* violence. It is in this context that great slaughter (महारंभ) has been forbidden. Keeping away from great slaughter itself amounts to reduction in violence. Now it should be clear that concession to compulsory violence notwithstanding, the move towards reduction in violence confirms the fact that the basis of life is not violence but nonviolence, love and friendship.

Anuvrat is a practical experiment. It underlines the principle of reduction in violence, which is entirely conducive to social peace and life's development and stability. Unbalanced violence is a step towards unbounded violence. The latter poses a serious threat to cultural integrity. Unbalanced minds have a major role in destroying and extinguishing ancient cultures. To remedy unbalanced minds the principle of reduction in violence will have to be conceded. This principle is as much invaluable socially and culturally as religiously. Therefore mitigating the intensity of violence is imperative.

Cultural progress is possible by not allowing violent trends to occupy the centre-stage. Where this is not ensured, the decline of culture becomes inevitable. It is to meet this contingency that *Anuvrat*

has raised its voice in favour of reduction in violence, besides answering the compulsory needs of life, it also extirpates its undesirable elements.

Some political systems believe in the use of violence for enforcing an ideology. Similarly some religious organisations also favour adopting violent means to forcibly impose their faith and beliefs, so much so that no hesitation is felt even in physically exterminating the resisters.

Anuvrat regards them both as subversive of the attempt to build a healthy society. Violence as a necessary weapon to enforce an ideology brings about an endless killing spree. In my opinion, religious and intellectual freedoms are natural human qualities. Freedom of ideas is bound to create differences of opinion. Under these circumstances it is permissible to explain one's point of view, but the imposition of any view is inexcusable, for the violence generated in the process becomes increasingly accentuated and interminable. In one sense it is the first step towards extreme and pervasive violence (महाहिंसा).

Lord Mahavira had said that *maha himsa* (extreme and pervasive violence) leads to hell. Without going into the metaphysical concepts of heaven and hell, it is clear that widespread violence makes human life infernal, which in turn unbalances the mind, as a result of which social and cultural values become disintegrated and human consciousness itself gets degenerated.

The principle of reduction in violence is a developed form of the principle of purity of means.

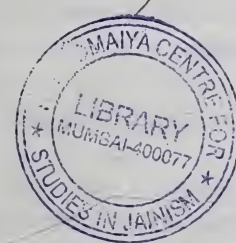
No human endeavour can be regarded as desirable if it is sullied by evil means, irrespective of the exalted nature of the end in view. A

case in point is the aim of the socialist systems to make adequate comforts and facilities available to a majority of the people or that of some religions to somehow ensure that people, do not go astray by leaving the prescribed path, no matter what the cost is in terms of human lives. Such a thing can never be approved.

Mutual killings create a vicious circle and become responsible for sowing the seeds of violence in human consciousness. Increasing growth of violence results in extreme and pervasive violence, which in turn generates a mental state incapable of doing any social good.

Creeds believing in forcible proselytization violate the religious spirit. They betray sectarianism, not piety. Violence encouraged by sectarianism is much more pernicious.

Under these circumstances the most unexceptionable course is an insistence on the purity of both ends and means, which is the same as reduction in violence. Evils like malice, suspicion, cruelty and killings will automatically weaken in a society wedded to reduction in violence. In it there will be no tendency to threaten the existence of others for selfish ends. *Anuvrat* is totally opposed to treating violence as the basis of life. Moreover, treating it thus can do no good to society. It is only through progressive reduction in violence that equality, friendship, love, goodwill and harmony can be practised.



Why a Religious Revolution ?

Human life is multi-dimensional. Each dimension is related to all others. Every aspect of life opens up new dimensions, which we understand only partially. There are facts related to each dimension which remains unknown to us. The range and scope of the known facts can be defined and understood, but those of the unknown cannot even be imagined.

One knows very little about all those things that human life is related to. Each relation fulfils some need or the other. The most intimate relation is with the body. Having understood this relation one gets down to fulfilling its needs. The body needs food, clothing, shelter etc. Man has intelligence too. We need it for intellectual activities like studying and contemplation. The human mind functions through thinking and making choices. Thus the existence of the body and the mind entails the presence of different attitudes and tendencies. As soon as the dilemma 'to do or not to do' confronts us, loss of peace of mind becomes inevitable. One who has lost peace feels a need for something that will restore it.

Religion is exactly the kind of thing that fulfils the above need effectively. Some people believe that religion is meant to fulfil man's social needs. It sounds illogical that religion was conceived to ensure that social order is not disturbed. The tendency to treat social order as a concern of religion is based on the tradition of collective, everyday religion (लोकधर्म) dealing with three aspects : *dharma* (virtue or

religious merit), *artha* (utility) and *kama* (sexual love). The whole social order can disintegrate if excessive attention to *artha* and *kama* is not regulated by *dharma*. Therefore *dharma* meant for social good has to be understood in the above perspective, in which case alone it can command respect and faith. But so far as spiritual *dharma* or *moksha dharma* is concerned, it cannot legislate in matters of social organization.

Dharma basically aims at securing mental peace. The mind generates uncertainties which in turn bring about loss of peace. The process involved in restoring lost peace is nothing but *dharma*. *Dharma* is more individual-oriented than society-oriented. It solves mental problems more than social problems.

In the course of time *loka-dharma* (collective, everyday religion), meant for creating a proper social order, and *atma-dharma* (individual religion), meant for personal elevation and mental peace, got mixed. As a result of this confusion, religion came to be regarded as an instrument of creating a good social order. Consequently the basic aim of religion got relegated to secondary position and the social aspect became prominent. The accretion of certain elements made religion lose its basic spiritual character, which was like covering a bright fire with a pile of ash.

The mixing of *loka-dharma* and *adhyatma-dharma* (spirituality) neither helped the social order, nor gave stability to values like morality and integrity. Equally, it failed to solve the problem of mental disquietitude. Hence the need to review the very concept of *dharma* and to undertake a revolutionary programme for expressing its basic character, lest everybody should regard himself as religious and yet be far removed from it.

There is an incident dating back to King Shrenik. The royal assembly was in session. One day the question as to who was in a

majority in the kingdom—religious people or irreligious people—was raised in the presence of officers and intellectuals. Some of them said the everyone in the kingdom was religious. Those who opposed this view said that none wanted to call himself irreligious, despite being one.

The king, addressing his secretary, said, 'Abhaya, a definite answer has to be given to the question raised.' Abhaya Kumar assured the king that his order would be obeyed.

The next day Abhaya Kumar got two camps set up, one black and the other white. Then he got it proclaimed that every subject of the king was to assemble where the camps were pitched and that religious people should get into the white camp and the irreligious ones into the black camp.

The whole town was astir. People reached the site of the camps with all kinds of grave misgivings. Soon they got into the camps and the field where the camps were pitched became empty.

Taking a few officers with him Abhaya Kumar first entered the white camp and asked the people present what made them religious. One of them said, 'My religion is to look after my family and I am following it even at the cost of facing countless problems.'

The second man said, 'Agriculture is my family religion. Even though I am good at many other occupations, I am following the religion of the family.'

The third man said, 'Every day I eat only after I have performed a few acts of charity and earned religious merit. In no circumstances do I eschew this practice.'

The fourth man said, 'My religion is to sell meat. In doing so I provide nourishment to hundreds of people.'

The fifth man said, 'I am a priest. Since many generations past we have been worshipping God. I am following the same religion.'

One by one, all those present certified their religiosity and in so doing they upheld their family tradition as religion.

Next, Abhaya Kumar went into the black camp. Two persons were sitting there. He questioned them about their being irreligious. They replied, 'We often listened to religious discourses. The monks gave us religious inspiration. Having gained philosophical insights we got pledged to practising the vows meant for the laymen. One of them was to abstain from alcoholic drinks. Out of sheer carelessness we once succumbed to the temptation of drinking and we have not yet done penance for it. Violation of a vow not followed by penance is a great sin.'

Abhay Kumar pronounced them to be endowed with real knowledge of religion, for only those people can be conscious of their sins who have a fine sense of discrimination.

There are countless people who belong to the above category of the two self-proclaimed sinners. Their misunderstanding is a direct result of the mixture of the two types of *dharma*. They have to be made aware of the fact that they are truly religious. It is necessary to remove the illusion of being religious from the minds of those people who merely follow the social, familial or traditional injunctions.

There is a dire need for a religious revolution so that *dharma* may be properly evaluated in the light of the present ideology of realism and scientific values. A five-point programme aimed at bringing about such a revolution has already been discussed under the title '*Anuvrat Ke Aagaami Pachis Varsh*' (Next Twenty-Five Years of *Anuvrat*). Just to remind ourselves, those five points are :

1. Intellectuality
2. Practicality
3. Solution-proneness
4. Contemporariness
5. Religious harmony

Sectarianism has always been practised in the name of religion. But sometimes it assumes too much bigotry. The Middle Ages represented a period of bigotry. It seems to be nearing its end in modern times. The beginning of a new phase is the most opportune time for a religious revolution.

What we need now is collective thinking. What we have to think about is the paradox that despite collective efforts and religious faith, man is not transforming temperamentally, nor is he able to obtain mental peace. Why is it so? This inevitably points to the fact that as yet our understanding of religion is imperfect and our faith in religion is inadequate. Religious revolution will have a future only when people wedded to religion feel this inadequacy.



A Search for Life's Values

The twentieth century is nearing its end. It is difficult to predict what agenda man is going to follow in its last decade. Will he correct his past mistakes? Will he plan his future? Or will he strengthen his foundation by spending every moment in a state of full awakening?

Thanks to unprecedented scientific progress in the present century man has become a traveller in space, landed on the moon and is now contemplating building permanent space stations and settlements. By splitting the atom he has succeeded in gaining access to inexhaustible sources of energy. He is using all his strength to make more spectacular achievements in the twenty-first century. The important point to note here is that all this progress has taken place on the physical or material plane. Can any individual, Society or nation be content with merely material progress? Can anyone believing in lofty character, morality and humanity ever hope to realise his/her dream of complete development through rank materialism?

At the heart of our culture is character or righteous conduct. Life's values are more important than life itself. Only he can preserve the purity of his conduct who has full faith in these values. Today we are facing a crisis of values. Besides, people are ceaselessly struggling to satisfy even their basic needs. They live in a state of uncertainty and anxiety about such elementary things as food, clothing, housing, medical help and education. Raising their standard of living poses a big problem. Since it concerns tens of millions of people its importance

cannot be denied, nor can it be ignored. Can these starved, ill-clad people living on pavements and in slums even dream of making available to their children the basic facilities of education and medicine? Let us not forget that these conditions of privation and indigence are to a certain extent responsible for the increasing crimes in society. That both destitution and surfeit give rise to criminal tendencies cannot be gainsaid.

The fundamental question is :Why should this happen? In my opinion its biggest reason is that people have forgotten the values of life. These values are of two types : those that are eternal and those that are contemporary. The latter keep changing according to time, space and circumstances. The former, however, are timeless and can never be divorced from life. If they tend to be sidetracked, overlooked and forgotten, a situation arises that should cause utmost concern. *Anuvrat* is an attempt to revive people's awareness of and interest in these eternal values.

We celebrated 1987 as the year of *Jivan Vigyan* (the science of living), which means an all-round development of life. In other words *Jivan Vigyan* stands for a balanced development of the intellectual and emotional aspects of life. It involves a process that brings out all the values of life. Some of these values are :

Fearlessness, sweetness, truth, straightforwardness, compassion, fortitude, detachment, self-reliance, self-discipline, forbearance, dutifulness, restraint on individual acquisition, authenticity, reconciliation between science and spirituality, mental balance or poise, nonsectarianism, coexistence and unity of mankind.

The values of life that are variable have their rise and fall. But the above values are not time or context-bound. They were relevant in the past, they are relevant in the present and they will be relevant

in the future. That is why their present degeneration bodes ill for the future.

Our youths are passing through a phase of two parallel systems of values. On the one hand there is Indian cultural heritage and on the other is the dazzling glitter of consumerism. The latter has dimmed their consciousness of sacrifice and is pushing them deeper and deeper into a total loss of values. Consumerism and its associated wants are leading them astray resulting in new problems.

Some of the major problems plaguing modern society are indiscipline, unrighteousness, cruelty, imbalance, communal and religious fanaticism, racial segregation and a reckless nuclear race. At the root of them are the twin elements of violence and acquisitiveness.

Having in him genetic traces (*samskars*) of violence, man himself feels terrorized and in turn terrorizes others. These traits are not the product of immediate circumstances. They represent the accumulated outcome of innumerable generations and have over a period acquired a trenchancy that is tearingly painful. Modern man is suffering from and groaning under that pain.

The main source of violence is acquisitiveness. Man forever is desirous of possessing and acquiring more and more and this inevitably results in violence. We notice violence in the outside world and find the desire to possess within. But in reality they are the obverse and converse of the same thing. They represent but one problem. And the solution lies not in war, not in weapons, not in terrorism, not in industrialization, not in computers, not in robots. It lies in *Anuvrat* because *Anuvrat* is the basic minimum code of conduct for a human being. One who practises *Anuvrat* cannot be cruel or brutal, cannot be a terrorist, cannot support untouchability and racial discrimination, cannot propagate religious fanaticism, cannot adulterate foodstuff,

cannot purchase or sell votes, cannot favour social dogmas, cannot use intoxicants.

Anuvrat is not content simply with preaching and propagating the values it seeks to establish in society. It talks of a workable practical religion and the way to make it practical is Preksha Meditation (a system of meditation which requires the engaging of one's mind fully in the perception of subtle, internal and innate phenomena of consciousness). The use of meditation results in a change of habits and the genetic mental endowment and in the sublimation of behaviour. Preksha Meditation is a tried and tested technique and its regular practice transforms the entire personality. A solid base of its practice produces the best results.

The youth of today are at the crossroads. They know neither the road to be taken nor the destination. Not that they are bereft of the desire to do and become something. They have their dreams too. The desire can be fulfilled and the dreams can be realized, provided there is meaningful search for the forgotten values of life. Without committing themselves to and imbibing and practising the eternal values they may make material progress but can never develop spiritually. Means of pleasure and comforts can be created but happiness and contentment will still elude them. *Anuvrat* and Preksha Meditation beckon them. Let them heed the call. They would then realise the hollowness of their life and feel induced to light the torch of life's values. Thus alone can they ennoble their character, leave its lasting impress and preserve the best elements of our glorious cultural heritage.

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